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Its interest hangs mainly on the contrast between two sisters, — the elder unparalleled but by her mother in prudery and hypocrisy; the younger a creature of genial impulses, “a domesticated sunbeam,” diffusing light and gladness everywhere except in her own home, and failing there only because the darkness is that which cannot be penetrated. Of living American novelists, we can hardly think of one who excels Mrs. Dorr in what is equally a desideratum in fiction and in history, — the capacity of managing a sufficient number of side-scenes, under-plots, and episodes to sustain dramatic interest, without violating dramatic unity.

18. — *Mimic Life: or, Before and Behind the Curtain. A Series of Narratives.* By ANNA CORA RITCHIE (formerly Mrs. Mowatt). Boston: Ticknor and Fields. 1856. 12mo. pp. 408.

“THE Lights and Shadows of the Stage” would have been a not inappropriate *alias* for this title. Mrs. Ritchie vindicates the capacity of her late profession, not only to preserve uncontaminated, but to nurture and cherish, glorious types of moral beauty no less than of genius; and at the same time lets us into the source and process of the debasing and corrupting influences to which many of its members have yielded. The stories are all tragedies, unless we except the last, in which the heroine is made happy by the suicide of her accepted, but unloved lover, who adopts this ultra-heroic mode of abdicating in favor of his successful rival. The interest of each of the tales is even painfully intense; and they are all characterized by pure and lofty sentiment, and wrought out in a style of exquisite grace and beauty.

19. — *Illustrations of Scripture; suggested by a Tour through the Holy Land.* By HORATIO B. HACKETT, Professor in the Newton Theological Seminary. Boston: Heath and Graves. 1855. 12mo. pp. 340.

PROFESSOR HACKETT, instead of following the beaten track of authorship, and publishing a journal of his Eastern tour, has thrown into a series of chapters such of his observations as promised aid in verifying the authenticity and expounding the text of Scripture. Each of his chapters contains a distinct department of illustration; one being devoted to modes of travelling, another to agriculture, and so on. We were previously aware of his critical acumen; he here shows himself

no less careful as an observer than acute as a critic. Where he adduces facts well known before, he often places them in a new light, or employs them for a new purpose; and there is more in the volume of strictly original matter than would antecedently have seemed attainable by a gleaner in a field already so faithfully harvested. The value of the book is enhanced by a full alphabetical index; and, as the work is one which ought to live and last, we would suggest that in a second edition its utility may be still further increased by an index of the texts illustrated.

- 20.—*A History of Philosophy in Epitome.* By DR. ALBERT SCHWEGLER. Translated from the original German, by JULIUS H. SEELYE. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 1856. 24mo. pp. 365.

THE title and dimensions of this work are well adapted to awaken inquiry. If an actual history of speculative philosophy can be compressed within so narrow a space, the author has performed a rare service for students in his own country and ours. So far as we have been able to examine his work, we are more than satisfied with its execution. Shunning all discussion and self-display, adhering rigidly to method, confining himself to the enumeration of facts and opinions, and grouping his narrative around the representative minds of successive ages, he has given us a perfectly coherent and continuous history of philosophy, from its beginnings in Greece down to Hegel, of whose school he is a disciple. Compendious treatises on great subjects are apt to excite contempt for their leanness; this, on the other hand, awakens admiration for its fulness and explicitness.

- 21.—*Di Publio Virgilio Marone.* Saggio per Storia Patria di GIUSEPPE RESTI FERRARI, Presidente Emerito D' g. R. Tribunale di Prima Cognizione, Socio della Mantovana Accademia di Scienze, Lettere, ed Arti. Mantova: Coi Tipi Virgiliani di L. Caranenti. 1853. 4to. pp. 128.

NOWHERE in Italy is the decay of ancient grandeur more painfully marked than in the strong city which is the southern outpost of the Austrian empire. In the days of Charles V., when the Gonzagas were at the height of their power, the boast of Mantua was prouder than the boast of Florence or Genoa. No court could be more splendid, no luxury more profuse, no palaces more magnificent, than those of